

# CREATING A SENSORY REGULATION PLAN

## PROPRIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM



**Proprioception** refers to our sense of **body awareness**.

Our proprioceptive receptors are located in our muscles, joints, and connective tissues and are used to help us coordinate movements and understand where our body is positioned.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

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## INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered why stress balls are called stress balls? Or why people bite their nails?

Proprioception refers to the feedback our brain receives from receptors located in our **muscles, joints, and connective tissue**. This input enables us to coordinate actions like walking, typing, or reaching for an object, all while maintaining balance and posture. For example, when you walk down a flight of stairs, your proprioceptive system helps you gauge the height of each step and adjust your movements accordingly, without needing to look at your feet. It's this continuous flow of information that allows you to perform everyday tasks effortlessly.

One of the unique aspects of proprioception is that it cannot be "overloaded" as easily as our other senses. For example, even if someone really loves music, eventually they will be ready for quiet. This makes proprioceptive activities a powerful tool for managing sensory overload and promoting relaxation. However, it's important to note that any proprioceptive activity will also stimulate other sensory systems, potentially leading to overload of those sense.

By proactively incorporating regulating proprioceptive input throughout your day, you can **reduce anxiety, enhance focus, and help prevent sensory overload**.

### Signs someone is struggling with proprioceptive processing may include:

- Clumsiness or frequent accidents/injuries
- Difficulty understanding where their body is in space
- Using too much or too little pressure
- Avoidance of certain movements or activities requiring balance
- Poor posture or slumping
- Difficulty with coordination
- Frequent fidgeting
- A history of self-injury that the client experienced

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

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## SECTION GUIDE

### SENSORY ASSESSMENT

1

Fill out the Proprioceptive Sensory Assessment to the best of your ability.

### CONSIDERATIONS

2

Review this section to explore factors that may be influencing your relationship with proprioceptive input.

### PROPIOCEPTIVE INPUT

3

Read this section to learn about proprioceptive input, common themes, and how it may relate to you.

### ACTIVITIES, SUPPORTS & ACCOMMODATIONS

4

Explore Activities, Supports, and Accommodations that you may find helpful.

### SENSORY EXPLORATION

5

Use the worksheets to track how sensory distressors and regulatory supports are affecting you.

### PROPIOCEPTIVE REGULATION PLAN

6

Use what you learned about yourself to create a Sensory Regulation Plan.

**\*WORKBOOK PAGES ONLY AVAILABLE IN SENSORY REGULATION GUIDE BOOK**



# SENSORY ASSESSMENT

1

# SENSORY ASSESSMENT

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## PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

### Instructions

Fill out the Proprioceptive Sensory Assessment to the best of your ability.

Answering “unsure” isn’t opting out of the question, that’s equally valuable information.

Think about what you did as a kid and when you’re overwhelmed, there are likely some helpful things you’ve suppressed or unlearned.

Notice where your answers have changed over time. Was there a time where your answer to that question would have been different? Why?

Highlight “unsure” answers to review in the Interoception section.

# SENSORY ASSESSMENT

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## PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

SENSORY PROCESSING	RATING SCALE			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Unsure
I lean on walls or other people for support and/or bump into things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't notice changes in my posture or body alignment (e.g., when I'm slouching).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can sense when I've overexerted myself physically (muscle fatigue, injury, strain).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel better after moving my body (e.g., walking, stretching, exercising).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My body feels more relaxed when I use a weighted blanket, heavy comforter, or get a massage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm an active person (by choice) and/or I was in the past.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's easier for me to think when I'm moving my body (e.g., walking, running, stretching).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy activities that provide intense body movement (e.g., dancing, climbing, running).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I tend to fidget when I'm trying to focus (e.g. biting nails, bouncing leg).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel relaxed when I engage in activities that involve "heavy work" (e.g., swimming, push ups, biking).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being aware of my body brings up negative feelings, thoughts or memories for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My relationship feels different than it has in the past (e.g., how comfortable I am being in my body).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# SENSORY ASSESSMENT

## PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

SENSORY SEEKING	RATING SCALE			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Unsure
I like weighted blankets, tight hugs and/or being squeezed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like movement activities (e.g., sports, exercise, stretching, walking).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I'm overwhelmed I'll bang or hit things and/or myself or I have in the past.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I tend to bite my nails, shake my leg or play with things on my body (i.e. hair, clothing, jewelry).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to fidget.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like deep pressure massages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SENSORY AVOIDING	RATING SCALE			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Unsure
I dislike activities that involve deep pressure (being hugged tightly, wearing tight clothing).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't like being places where I have to be aware of my body in space (e.g., busy venue, crowded room).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I dislike doing activities that require movement and body awareness (e.g., dancing, yoga, sports).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer to be sedentary.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

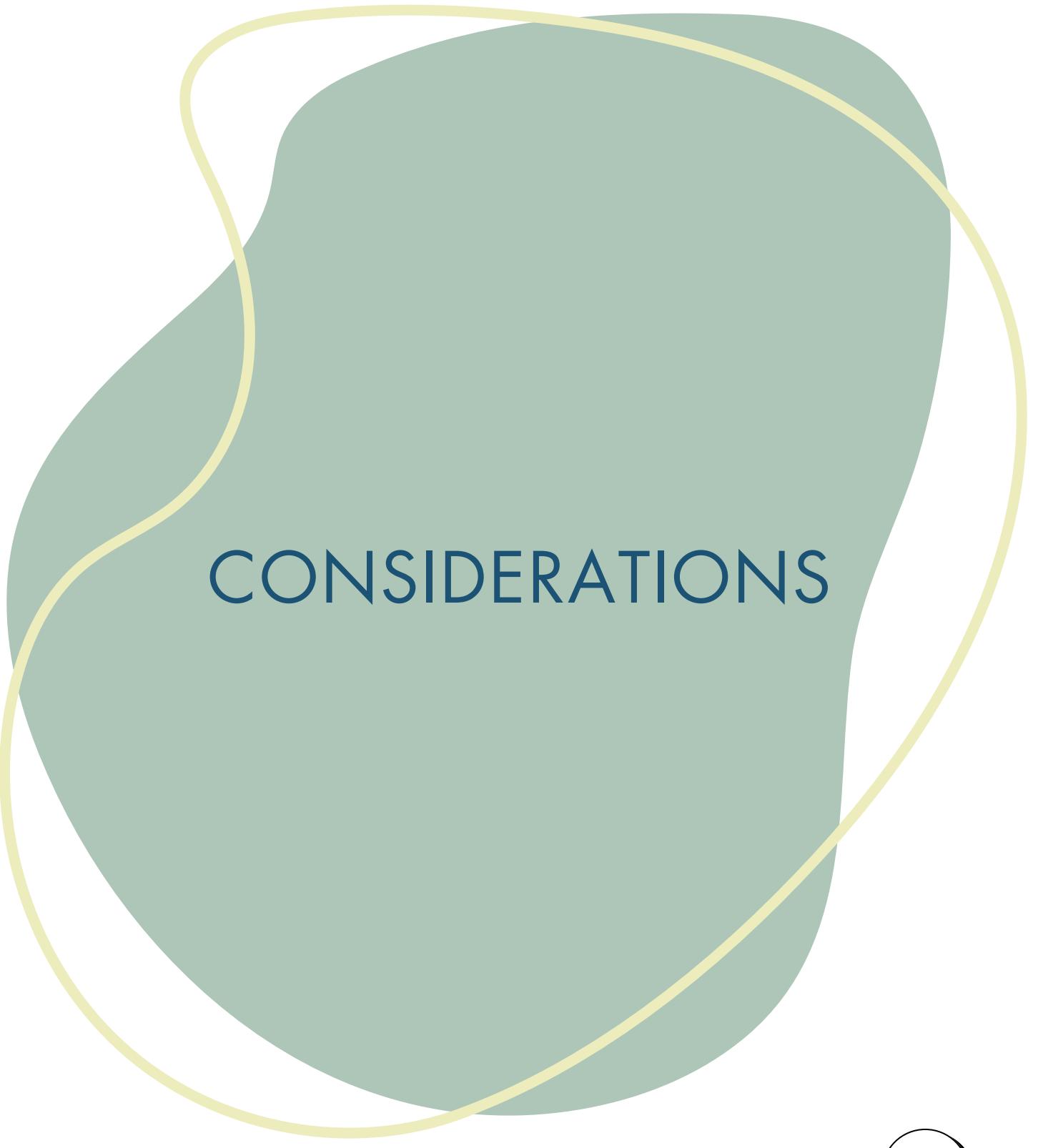
# SENSORY ASSESSMENT

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## PROPRIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

DISTRESSORS	SUPPORTS I LIKE(D)
<input type="radio"/> Types of hugs (e.g., tight hugs)	<input type="radio"/> Fidgeting
<input type="radio"/> Intense movement activities	<input type="radio"/> Biting nails
<input type="radio"/> Holding a posture (e.g., yoga pose)	<input type="radio"/> Exercising or stretching
<input type="radio"/> Tight clothes	<input type="radio"/> Weighted blankets
<input type="radio"/> Strong vibrations	<input type="radio"/> Compression clothing or socks
<input type="radio"/> Being in cramped places (e.g., bus)	<input type="radio"/> Massages
<input type="radio"/> Learning a dance	<input type="radio"/> Resistance bands or weights
<input type="radio"/> Lifting or pushing heavy things	<input type="radio"/> Repetitive movement

### NOTES



# CONSIDERATIONS

2

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

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## Socialization

### Early Experiences

Caregivers shape how we relate to our bodies—encouraging or discouraging certain movements affects body awareness. For example, they may discourage fidgeting.

### Cultural Norms and Expectations

Cultures vary in what they see as desirable physical expression. For example, often men are expected to bond over sports and women are expected to be more demure.

### Social Interactions

Peer influence, especially in activities like sports or dance, can heighten body awareness, while appearance-focused environments may create discomfort with bodily awareness.

## Physical Health

### Injury or Illness

Physical health changes, such as an injury or chronic illness, can significantly alter one's proprioceptive experience. A sprained ankle, for example, may cause a person to lose confidence in their ability to walk, affecting their proprioceptive feedback loop.

### Aging

As people age, they may experience changes in proprioception due to decreased muscle strength, joint flexibility, or sensory nerve function. Older adults may struggle with balance and coordination, requiring them to adapt in order to maintain stability and prevent falls.

### Physical Conditioning

Regular physical activity can improve proprioceptive acuity, as individuals develop greater awareness and control over their body movements. Athletes, for instance, tend to have heightened proprioception due to repeated exposure to dynamic body movements.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

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## Regulatory State

### Emotional and Regulatory State

Stress, anxiety, or emotional distress may cause tension in the body, impacting the way one perceives and reacts to physical stimuli. For instance, someone who is anxious might feel heightened bodily sensations, such as tightness in the chest or discomfort in the muscles, which can alter their proprioceptive feedback.

### Fatigue

Fatigue often reduces proprioceptive awareness. People may experience a diminished ability to accurately perceive their body's position in space, leading to slower reaction times, compromised coordination, and an increased risk of injury.

### Physiological Responses

Physiological responses, such as changes in heart rate, blood pressure, or muscle tension, can also affect proprioception. These bodily responses to different stimuli (e.g., exercise, stress, or relaxation) influence the way an individual perceives their movements and spatial orientation. A person experiencing elevated stress hormones may have a heightened sense of physical discomfort, which can interfere with proprioceptive awareness.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

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## Medication

### **Stimulants (e.g., methylphenidate, amphetamines)**

These medications can enhance attention and motor control by increasing dopamine and norepinephrine activity in the brain, leading to improved proprioceptive awareness and better coordination (Biederman et al., 2004). This may reduce impulsivity and improve posture and movement regulation.

### **Antidepressants (SSRIs/SNRIs)**

Some individuals may experience side effects like tremors or muscle tension, which can disrupt proprioceptive feedback (Fava et al., 2007).

### **Second-generation antipsychotics**

These can have mixed effects on proprioception, sometimes improving overall motor regulation or, in contrast, causing side effects like tremors or akathisia, which impair proprioceptive processing (Rico et al., 2010).

## Trauma

People who have experienced trauma, especially early or chronic trauma, may become disconnected from their bodily sensations due to emotional numbing, dissociation, or a heightened sense of vigilance. This disconnection can lead to difficulties in accurately perceiving body movements or sensations—either through acutely experiencing or having blunted reactions to proprioceptive input.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

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## Context-Related Factors

### **Environmental Changes**

The environment in which a person operates can influence their proprioceptive awareness. For example, in a cluttered or unfamiliar space, a person may be more cautious, adjusting their body movements more consciously to avoid obstacles. Conversely, in familiar environments, proprioceptive feedback may become more automatic.

### **Social Contexts and Expectation**

In certain social contexts, a person might suppress or exaggerate their proprioceptive responses. For example, in a formal setting, a person may become hyper-aware of their posture and movements to appear controlled and composed, while in a casual or intimate setting, they may feel freer to express more fluid, natural body movements.

### **Sensory Integration and Adaptation**

Over time, people can adapt to or recalibrate their proprioceptive responses depending on the environment and demands placed on them. For example, someone with a sensory processing disorder may have difficulty integrating proprioceptive input and may either seek excessive movement or avoid certain activities. Similarly, individuals working in specific occupations (e.g., dancers, surgeons, or pilots) might undergo training that tunes their proprioceptive awareness for particular tasks.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

## Self-Injurious Behaviors

Because getting proprioceptive input is one of our body's main grounding supports, many people will seek out intense proprioceptive input, either consciously or subconsciously, when they are feeling overwhelmed, overstimulated, understimulated and/or disconnected from their bodies. These behaviors are often misunderstood as self-harm because they may appear violent or harmful leading to people being misunderstood, feeling lost, and even arrested or hospitalized due to this misunderstanding. **If you have a client with a history of “self-harm” since childhood, when clinically appropriate, explore whether this was based on an attempt to harm or a way of grounding themselves through intense proprioceptive input.**

### Questions to Ask

Have you always experienced these things when overwhelmed or did it develop over time?  
What need does this behavior meet?  
Do you try to do these things in areas where people won't see?

#### Some proprioceptive seeking supports that may be misunderstood as self-harm:

- Banging or hitting the body (e.g., hands, head, or limbs)
- Scratching or rubbing the skin aggressively
- Pushing or slamming into walls or objects (e.g., door frames, furniture)
- Biting or chewing on body parts (e.g., nails, fingers, or inside of cheeks)
- Banging head
- Throwing or kicking objects forcefully
- Pinching yourself
- AND MANY MORE

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

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## IMPAIRMENTS

### Emotional Impairments

**More acutely:** May be overwhelmed by tight clothing, touch, or physical closeness, which can lead to overstimulation, anxiety, or chronic stress.

**Less Acutely:** May seek intense physical input to feel grounded, which can lead to risky behaviors, overexertion, or injury.

### Cognitive Impairments

**More Acutely:** Bodily sensations can be distracting, making stillness, sustaining attention, and focus difficult.

**Less Acutely:** They may appear fidgety, restless, or uncoordinated, as they seek out proprioceptive input, which can also impact focus.

### Social Impairments

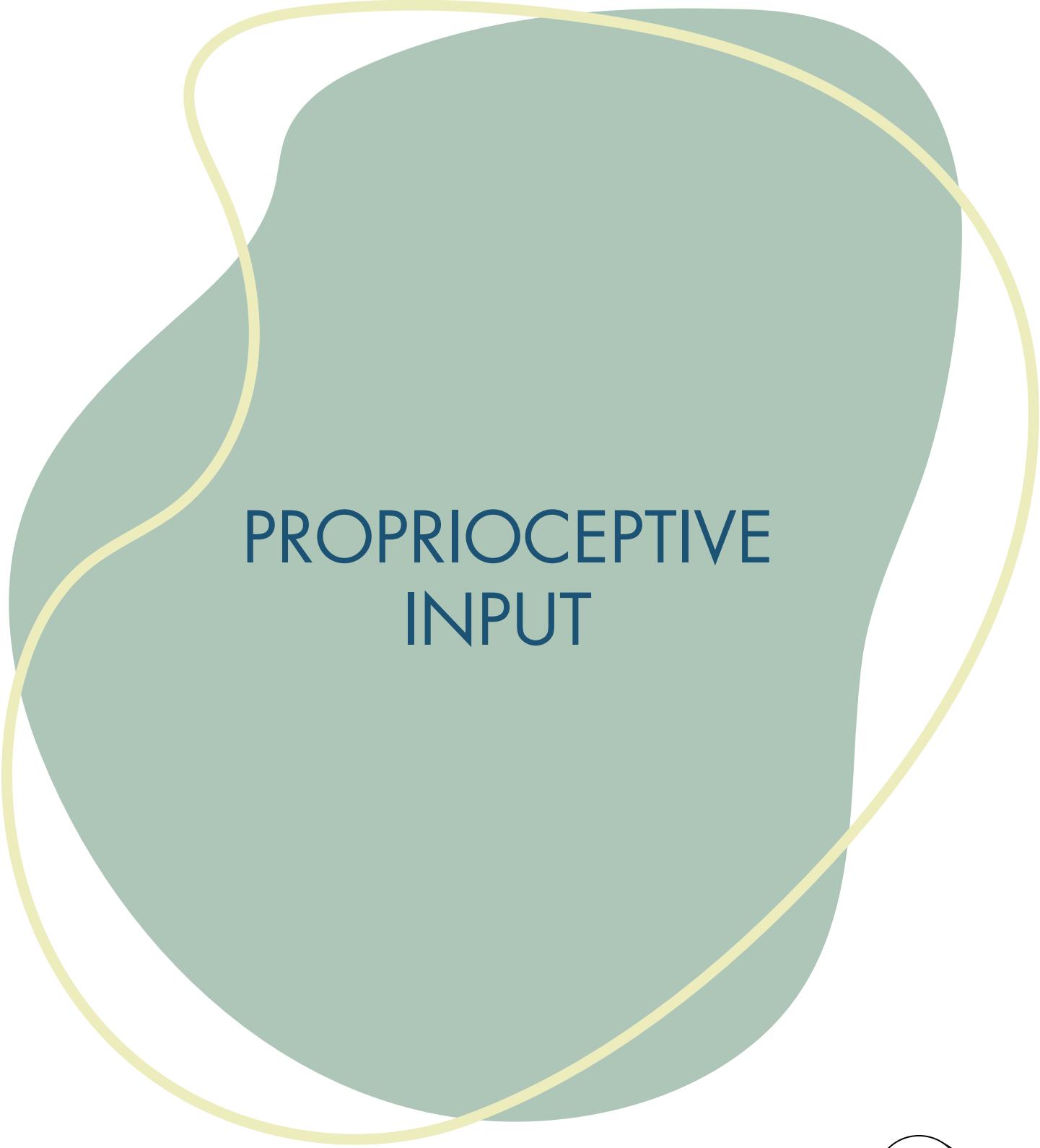
**More acutely:** May avoid group activities or physical closeness to prevent sensory overload.

**Less Acutely:** May engage in socially inappropriate behaviors (e.g., excessive touching, bumping into others, excessive movements), which can cause social discomfort or rejection.

### Physical Impairments: Sleep Disturbances

**More Acutely:** Discomfort from sheets, body movement, or position may disrupt sleep.

**Less Acutely:** Difficulty relaxing without strong sensory input; may need heavy pressure or intense activity to wind down.



# PROPRIOCEPTIVE INPUT

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# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

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## UNPLEASANT INPUT

### Intensity of Stimulation

If the proprioceptive input is too strong or overwhelming (e.g., excessive pressure or fast-paced movement), it can cause discomfort or distress.

### Duration

Prolonged exposure to proprioceptive input can lead to sensory overload and discomfort. For example, continuous vigorous movement for too long can be overwhelming either due to physical discomfort or unpleasant sensory input from other systems being affected.

### Unexpected or Unpredictable Sensations

Sudden or unpredictable input, like abrupt movements or a tap on the shoulder, can be unsettling especially in less comfortable environments.

### Lack of Control

Not having control over input (e.g., being moved without consent) may cause distress.

### Novelty

New sensations may cause confusion or discomfort.

### Overstimulation

Too much input at once (e.g., heavy pressure, fast movements) can overwhelm the brain and lead to irritation or anxiety. This will also be heavily affected by the tactile and vestibular systems which can be overloaded even with pleasant input.

### Inconsistent Feedback

Alternating between light and heavy pressure or slow and fast movements can create confusion or discomfort.

### Discomfort in Body

If the body is physically compromised (e.g., due to injury, illness, or fatigue), even light proprioceptive input can be painful or uncomfortable. Physical discomfort is also affected by how comfortable the person is experiencing being in their body. For those who have traumatic experiences, this can be unpleasant and lead to distress.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## PLEASANT INPUT

For proprioceptive input, calming vs alerting are often divided into deep pressure activities and heavy work; **deep pressure tends to be more calming while heavy work tends to be more alerting.**

### CALMING

#### DEEP PRESSURE

Deep pressure activities involve firm, consistent input to the body with minimal physical exertion. They focus on soothing the nervous system and promoting relaxation, providing a grounding, calming effect.

### ALERTING

#### HEAVY WORK

Heavy work focuses on engaging muscles. It provides proprioceptive input by requiring physical effort and resistance, enhancing body awareness, focus, and self-regulation.

Certain attributes tend to make proprioceptive input more calming or alerting.

**Intensity:** Gentle, sustained pressure (e.g., weighted blankets) are more calming, while intense or high-energy activities (e.g., jumping, running) tend to be more alerting.

**Movement Type:** Linear movements (e.g., swinging back and forth) are typically calming, while circular movements (e.g., spinning) tend to be more alerting.

**Duration:** Longer, slower activities (e.g., deep pressure massages) tend to be calming, whereas brief, fast-paced activities (e.g., push-ups, lifting weights) may be more alerting.

**Muscle Engagement:** Activities that involve more passive or soothing muscle engagement (e.g., firm hugs) tend to be calming, while those that involve active muscle exertion (e.g., heavy lifting) may be more alerting.

**Novelty:** Newer sensations tend to be more alerting.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

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## PLEASANT INPUT

### Calming Input

#### **Slow, Rhythmic Movement**

Rocking, gentle swinging,  
slow yoga

#### **Stretching**

Deep static stretches, slow joint  
compressions

#### **Weighted Objects**

Weighted blankets, lap pads,  
weighted vests

#### **Deep Pressure**

Firm touch, massage,  
compression clothing

#### **Body Brushing**

Therapeutic brushing protocols

### Alerting Input

#### **Fast or Intense Movement**

Running, jumping, spinning

#### **Non-Rhythmic or Jerky Movement**

Sporadic dancing, quick shifting  
positions

#### **High-Intensity Activities**

Aerobic exercise, heavy lifting

#### **Unpredictable Input**

Sudden changes in body position  
or force

#### **Heavy Pressure with Movement**

Resistance activities (e.g., using  
resistance band)



# ACTIVITIES, SUPPORTS & ACCOMMODATIONS



# PROPIROCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## FIVE MINUTE ACTIVITIES

### HAND MASSAGE

Press your right thumb into your left palm and rub in circles, then individually squeeze each finger. Switch and repeat on the other hand.

### PRAYER PUSH

Bring your palms together at your chest with elbows out and press. Then flip your hands so fingers point down and push the backs together, keeping elbows out.

### ARM STRETCH

Interlock your fingers, extend your arms straight above you, and press your palms outward, stretching through your arms and shoulders.

### TOE RAISES

Stand on your tiptoes, then drop your heels quickly to the ground, using your full weight to create a noticeable thump when your heels land.

### EAR MASSAGE

Gently tug and massage your earlobes and the area around the outer ear. Use your thumbs to apply soft pressure around the ear's edge, and explore the area near your jaw and temple.

### SCALP & NECK MASSAGE

Using your fingertips, gently massage your scalp in circular motions, working your way from the forehead to the back of the neck. Apply gentle pressure to areas that feel tense.

### SHOULDER SQUEEZE

Place one hand on your opposite shoulder and use the fingers of your other hand to apply gentle pressure along the shoulder and upper arm. Squeeze and release, breathing deeply with each press.

### WRIST & FOREARM ROLL

Extend one arm in front of you and use your opposite hand to gently massage your wrist and forearm. Apply soft circular motions and let your hand be loose. Focus on the release of tension.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## HEAVY WORK

Heavy work refers to activities that involve pushing, pulling, lifting, or carrying objects, providing resistance and requiring significant muscle engagement. Potential benefits include improved focus, mood, regulation, body coordination, and body awareness. Here are some examples of common heavy work activities:

ACTIVITIES	EXERCISES	EQUIPMENT
Swimming	Push ups	Resistance band
Weightlifting	Sit ups	Weights
Running	Pull ups	Kettlebell
Yoga	Plank with leg lifts	Punching bag
Biking	Jumping jacks	Medicine ball
Basketball	Squats	Exercise ball
Soccer	Lunges	Balance ball
Climbing	High steps	Jump rope
Martial arts	Chair dips	Foam roller
Dancing	Leg lifts	Stair master
Volleyball	Burpees	Sandbags
Tennis	Handstands	Weighted ankle strap
Rowing	Superman	Barbell with plates
CrossFit	Deadlifts	Stairs

# PROPIROCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## WALL HEAVY WORK



### Wall pushes

1. Put both hands on the wall with your feet a little farther than arm's length back from the wall. Keep your heels on the ground and your arms straight.
2. Step forward with one foot.
3. Push forward into the wall as if you were trying to move it.

### Arm stretch

1. Put both hands on the wall with your feet a little farther than arm's length back from the wall. Keep your heels on the ground.
2. Pick one arm off the wall and keep it straight while you turn your body towards that side (i.e. if you're doing this with your right arm, turn towards the right wall).
3. Bring that arm back in and touch the opposite shoulder.
4. Repeat this motion a few times.
5. Go back to the starting position.
6. Repeat on the other side.

### Leg lifts

1. Put both hands on the wall with your feet a little farther than arm's length back from the wall. Keep your heels on the ground.
2. Lift one leg up and bring it up in front of you to make a 90-degree angle.
3. Stretch that leg back until it's straight.
4. Go back to the starting position.
5. Repeat on the other side.



### Wall push-ups

1. Put both hands on the wall with your feet a little farther than arm's length back from the wall. Keep your heels on the ground.
2. Bend your arms in as if you were doing a push up and push back to straight arms.

### Wall lunges

1. Put both hands on the wall with the feet a little farther than arm's length back from the wall. Keep your heels on the ground.
2. Lean your weight into the wall as if you were trying to push it forward.
3. Bend your knee in, bringing it up towards your chest and try to touch your knee with your head.
4. Go back to the starting position.
5. Repeat on the other side.

### Wall sits

1. Stand with your back against a wall and your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Walk your feet about 2 feet forward and slide down the wall until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Adjust your feet so that your knees are over your ankles and bent at a 90-degree angle.
3. Rest your upper body and head against the wall.
4. Hold for between 20 seconds-3 minutes.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## HIP OPENERS

The hips store emotional tension, stress, and trauma, often due to emotional suppression, sedentary lifestyles and poor posture.

Hip openers help release this tension, enhance flexibility, promote relaxation, and reduce anxiety, improving focus and deepening the mind-body connection.



*Lizard*



*Bound Angle*



*Half Pigeon*



*Seated Figure Four*



*Happy Baby*



*Supine Figure Four*



*Three Legged Downward-Facing Dog*



*Side Lunge*



*Garland*

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## YOGA POSES

### Easy:

- shield Cat Pose (Marjaryasana)
- shield Child's pose (Balasana)
- Downward dog (Adho mukha svanasana)
- Bridge (Setu Bandha Sarvangasana)
- shield Tabletop (Dandayamana Bharmanasana)
- Plow (Halasana)
- Cobra (Bhujangasana)

### Intermediate:

- shield Plank (Phalakasana):
  - shield Forearm plank (Phalakasana II)
  - shield Side plank (Vasisthasana)
  - shield Low plank (Chaturanga Dandasana)
- Boat (Navasana)
- Dolphin pose (Ardha Pincha Mayurasana)

### Advanced:

- Headstand (Sirsasana)
- Handstand (Adho Mukha Vrksasana)
- Warrior III (Virabhadrasana III)
- Eagle (Garudasana)
- Dancer (Natarajasana)
- Cow Face Pose (Gomukhasana)

Poses with a  are better for people that are less comfortable with vestibular input.

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## YOGA POSES



**Forward fold**

Uttanasana



**Child's pose**

Balasana



**Downward dog**

Adho mukha svanasana



**Warrior I**

Virabhadrasana I



**Warrior II**

Virabhadrasana II



**Shoulderstand**

Salamba Sarvangasana



**Dancer's pose**

Natarajasana



**Plank**

Phalakasana



**Standing side bend**

Tadasana side stretch



**Cobra**

Bhujangasana



**Tree pose**

Vrikshasana



**Side plank**

Vasisthasana

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

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## FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES



There are many everyday activities that provide proprioceptive input.

These tasks involve repetitive, weight-bearing movements that engage muscles, joints, and connective tissue, providing grounding proprioceptive input.

Here are some examples:

### GARDENING

Planting  
Watering  
Weeding  
Digging  
Raking  
Mowing the lawn

### CLEANING

Vacuuming  
Sweeping or mopping  
Moving furniture  
Washing the windows  
Changing bed sheets  
Scrubbing  
Taking out the trash  
Dusting

### LAUNDRY

Washing  
Sorting  
Putting clothes away

### HOME REPAIRS

Painting  
Plumbing  
Simple repairs

### EATING & DRINKING

Eating chewy food  
Eating crunchy food  
Drinking through a straw  
Chewing gum

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## DEEP PRESSURE SUPPORTS

### EQUIPMENT

Gum  
Weighted Blanket  
Resistance Band  
Weighted Clothing  
Compression Clothing  
Trampoline  
Theragun  
Body Socks  
Hand Grippers  
Bean bag  
Foam rollers  
Stability balls  
Massage ball  
Lacrosse ball  
Hot spot therapy  
Foam roller  
Tennis ball

Theragun  
Cold Gel Cap  
Acupressure Ring

### FIDGETS

Jewelry  
Keychain  
Cracking knuckles  
Rubber bands  
Stress balls  
Fidget rings  
Therapy putty  
Clicking pens/pencils  
Rubik's cube  
Kinetic Sand  
Fidget Cube  
Finger massagers

# PROPIOCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## PAIN-RELATED SUPPORTS

Here are some things you can use if you're needing that acute proprioceptive input that pain provides in order to feel present in their body, especially when overwhelmed. Focus input on touch-sensitive parts of the body (e.g., hands, wrists, head, lips, neck).

\*This is NOT a comprehensive approach to harm reduction interventions.

### THERAPY PUTTY



### WEIGHTS



### HAIR CLIP



### RESISTANCE BAND



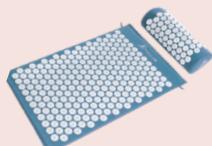
### HAND GRIP



### ACUPRESSURE RINGS



### ACUPRESSURE MAT



### TENS MACHINE\*



### COLD GEL CAP



### GUM



\*Consult with a physician before using a TENS machine.

# PROPIROCEPTIVE SYSTEM ACCOMMODATIONS

## MIRRORS

Mirrors can help you visually track and adjust your body positioning, especially during movement-based activities or when in the same position for an extended period of time.

## TEXTURED SURFACES

Add surfaces with different textures to provide tactile feedback. This may help you gauge your position and movement and keep you engaged with your environment.

## CREATIVE SEATING

Creative seating, such as yoga balls or wobble cushions, encourage body awareness by challenging balance and coordination while providing immediate sensory feedback.

## WEARABLE SENSORS

Some people may benefit from wearable devices that provide real-time feedback on posture, body alignment, or movement patterns.

## WEIGHTED ITEMS

Keeping weighted objects, like weights or a weighted blanket, on hand, can offer deep pressure input, which may help you feel more grounded and aware of your body.

## JOINT TRAINING

Practice exercises that target specific joints and other areas of tensions you notice consistently arising. If you sit a lot you may benefit from hip circles, spinal twists, or shoulder rotations.

## SEATING SUPPORT

Adjusting seating arrangements with supportive cushions, chairs, or posture aids can help improve posture and body awareness in sedentary settings.

## MOVEMENT BREAKS

Regular movement breaks, provide the body with regulating proprioceptive input enabling us to better handle distress that may arise throughout the day.

# PROPIROCEPTIVE SYSTEM

## CREATING A DAILY ROUTINE

Like most things in life, each person's sensory needs are unique. Some people prefer heavy and/or frequent proprioceptive input, while others prefer less intense input. If you are more sensitive to movement and balance activities (e.g., get dizzy easily, prefer having your feet on the ground, avoid inversions), start with exercises that involve less intense movement and/or balance. The tactile (touch) system is also very involved in deep pressure activities so pay attention to how the touch feels, if you don't like it try something else. That could mean more or less pressure or using another material/texture. In order to figure out what type of sensory regulation plan would work for you let's start with some exploration.

1. Try the activities, exercises, and supports that look good to you.
2. Make a list of the activities you find helpful.
3. Schedule times to take these breaks during your day while you get to know what works for you.
4. Create an exercise routine that's appropriate to your needs.
5. **End all routines with a calming activity (e.g., child's pose, self massage) until you feel ready to move on with your day.**
6. Implement a daily routine and make adjustments as needed.

### DAILY ROUTINE EXAMPLE

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|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. <b>Arm stretch:</b> 2 minutes   | 4. <b>Jump Squats:</b> 3 sets of 5      |
| 2. <b>Hip opener:</b> 2 minutes    | 5. <b>Weights:</b> 3 minutes            |
| 3. <b>Wall push:</b> 30 seconds x2 | 6. <b>Shavasana:</b> Until I feel ready |